DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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ACDA Views

Q. We hear that ACDA opposed the sale of F-15s to Saudi Arabia. Were the views of ACDA taken into account in making these decisions? What was the ACDA position with respect to the Egyptian and Israeli sales?

A. --As a result of an analysis of possible Middle East aircraft transfers, the Director of ACDA expressed concern over the sale to the Middle East of aircraft as advanced in capability as the F-15. However, at the same time, he also noted that he appreciated the presence of other overriding national interest, and, therefore, was prepared to support the sales as currently proposed. ACDA has never opposed the transfers under consideration of F-5Es to Egypt or F-16s to Israel. The ACDA position has not changed.

--From the arms control standpoint, it is essential that the military balance among Middle East nations be maintained by evenhanded treatment of the principal powers, in order to avoid destabilizing the situation. Beyond that, movement toward a peace settlement is, of course, a major arms control objective. It would be ideal if no new transfers were necessary. But given the prospect that movement toward a peace settlement may be facilitated by arms transfers, it is ACDA's view that the arms control risk associated with any given level of transfers is minimized by a balanced proposal, such as the announced combination of Saudi, Egyptian, and Israeli sales.